Summary of “human rights in seafood supply chains - what roles can eNGOs play?”
Consultation with North American and European eNGOs
Jan. 21, 2015

1. Introduction and Purpose

Human rights have recently become a focal point in sustainable seafood conversations worldwide. Environmental non-governmental organizations (eNGOs) work closely with seafood companies to improve the environmental responsibility of their business practices. Human rights abuses found within seafood supply chains could undermine partner commitments and the excellent environmental improvements that are underway. Because eNGOs have longstanding and trusted relationships with their business partners, and because the social and environmental concerns associated with seafood are often interrelated, these companies frequently turn to their eNGO partners for expertise on social issues and to serve as a liaison with outside groups. In January of 2015, FishWise guided an interactive discussion to understand how eNGOs can address human rights abuses within the seafood industry by helping companies implement responsible business practices. Representatives from 15 eNGOs and philanthropic foundations gathered to learn about challenges that other eNGOs and their partners were facing and to share perspectives about how to more fully address both environmental sustainability and social considerations.

2. Update of Recent FishWise Work

To begin, FishWise summarized how human rights have come to the forefront of seafood conversations and recent opportunities for businesses, NGOs, and funders to connect and collaborate on solutions that strengthen and expand existing efforts.

In 2014, FishWise authored a white paper on human rights in seafood supply chains, Trafficked II: An Updated Summary of Human Rights Abuses in the Seafood Industry. The white paper was intended to inform seafood businesses and stakeholders about the abuses taking place in seafood supply chains and provide recommendations that companies can take to improve human and labor rights within the industry. This research helped launch the social component of FishWise’s work, which now includes following the latest trends in seafood-related social compliance and tracking progress as human rights are increasingly relevant within the seafood industry.

To advance this work, FishWise has:
1. Facilitated networking between labor experts and eNGOs through a series of meetings and webinars. Several commonalities among organizational missions and areas for collaboration have been identified through these discussions.

2. Created and distributed 3 documents to help eNGOs communicate the issue of human rights to seafood stakeholders: Human Rights Glossary, Links between IUU Fishing and Human Rights, and Inspirational Case Studies.

3. Continued to host human rights and sustainable seafood conversations through multi-stakeholder meetings, conferences, and events.

3. Identify knowledge gaps and requests

At the this meeting, participants conducted an exercise to gather requests that eNGOs collectively received from the seafood industry, and identify human rights knowledge gaps that existed within the participating organizations.

Participants contributed the following:
1) Questions or conversations that eNGOs recently engaged in about human and labor rights issues within the seafood industry
2) Information, advice, or deliverables related to human and labor rights issues in the seafood industry that were requested by industry

After recording the information, participants organized each question or request into four categories (Information, Action & Deliverables, Recommendations, or Other). The group worked together to analyze the contents of each category and observe patterns.

4. Results

Visualizing the information helped participants to understand what would help eNGOs to communicate with seafood stakeholders on these topics. The majority of industry inquiries centered on understanding the scope of the problem and gathering information about responses from various sectors. The requests for information summarized in Appendix I reflect a need for tools and resources, lessons learned from other industries, and a clear understanding of stakeholder roles.

The requested actions and deliverables summarized in Appendix I indicate that industry representatives are looking to eNGOs for recommendations and advice. Relationships between these businesses and their eNGO partner and/or another eNGO can be strengthened if these eNGOs are better able to provide resources and expertise. Industry-requested deliverables included risk assessments, summary of social criteria within seafood certifications, and generation of consumer awareness. Other requests revealed that seafood businesses are also interested in best practice recommendations from NGOs. The seafood industry may look to NGOs to provide guidance about how to ensure safe labor in
supply chains or ask for recommendations about which of the available resources are most applicable to their supply chains. Other requests for guidance may include how to address social issues quickly once they become public, including steps to take, whom to involve, and appropriate mitigation efforts.

5. Next Steps

This session helped FishWise understand what companies need from NGO partners to improve the way they address human rights in their supply chains. FishWise will continue to gather input about next steps that will help eNGOs communicate with seafood stakeholders about these issues. FishWise will also continue to connect eNGOs with relevant human rights and labor experts, and will share the results of this session with those experts to continue the conversation.

FishWise will circulate these notes and next steps with interested parties, and share new developments over time. To contribute suggestions to the topic of human rights or to recommend other next steps please email Aurora Alifano at a.alifano@fishwise.org.
Appendix I: A summary of information that will improve eNGOs understanding and ability to discuss this topic with seafood businesses.

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<tr>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Background information that would strengthen current discussions:</th>
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| **Background** | Identify root causes that create these behaviors  
Determine the percent of human rights issues that come from seafood industry  
Determine the percent of the seafood industry affected by human rights issues  
Summarize government efforts to deal with these issues |
| **What are current efforts to address this within the seafood industry?** | List of companies that have zero tolerance policies regarding human rights  
Identify opportunities to connect with credible social organizations  
Synthesize methods to understand if human rights abuses are associated with the seafood bought by any specific company  
Summarize efforts by the major certification bodies (MSC, ASC, BAP) to include social criteria |
| **What information and tools are available?** | List of currently available data sources and reports  
Identify tools are available for retailers and buyers  
References to understand how human rights issues fit into various certification schemes  
Metrics used to determine and rate overall human rights issues (similar to Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch criteria?) |
| **What should consumers do?** | List of questions that consumers should ask  
Summary of the hotspots (location, fisheries, etc.) where these issues occur? |
| **Who are the experts working on these topics?** | Identify NGO expertise in human rights and labor issues  
List of lessons that can be learned from other sectors  
Explanation why NGO sector focused on environmental issues and not human rights  
Identify the role of environmental NGOs in addressing human rights issues  
Identify the role of environmental NGOs in human rights related policy  
Identify the role of government regulation and monitoring in addressing human rights issues |
What are important strategic considerations?
- Identify unintended consequences of international market approach
- Taking shortcuts on wages translate into cheaper products - would addressing human rights issues increase prices?

Can the industry work together in a precompetitive space?
- A safe place for industry representatives to engage with experts, inform each other, and discuss possible solutions

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<tr>
<th>Action/Deliverables</th>
<th>NGOs have been asked to:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Identify and support champions to lead on this issue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conduct a risk assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide guidance for suppliers that find human rights abuses in their supply chain</td>
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<td>Identify ways for industry to verify that supply chains are abuse free</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use existing mechanisms within certification systems to ensure adherence to social criteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Generate consumer awareness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide information and talking points for retailers to field questions from consumers about what to buy (or not buy)</td>
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Recommendations  Industry is looking for:
- Ways to ensure a labor safe supply chain - what tools exist?
- Examples of how to move quickly when issues become public, including identifying industry champions, order of operations, and appropriate consultants and partners?
- An understanding of how industry can drive action collectively - what is the industry’s role?

Other
- Media request: experts to discuss and inform the public (telegenic)
- Business partner request: help find a seafood partner to pilot traceability and storytelling system